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International Court of Justice

H0943-0002

Com. H
Take 1-Pg. 14
Meehan
13 June.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY FOR THE DEFENSE OF ORGANIZATIONS, TAKEN BEFORE A COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL DATED 13 MARCH 1946.

13 June, 1946.

(THE COMMISSION CONVENED AT 1130 HOURS.)

COMMISSIONER:

Mr. George R Taylor.

THE SS.

FELIX SCHIEBLICH, a witness, took the stand and testified as follows:

BY ~~THE COMMISSIONER:~~ Mr. George R Taylor

Q What is yourname?

A Felix Schieblich

Q Will you repeat this oath after me:

I swear by God, the Almighty and Omniscient, that I will speak the pure truth and will withhold and add nothing.

(The witness repeated the oath.)

THE COMMISSIONER: You may sit down. I understand that this witness' testimony will be confined to the aims and activities of the Waffen SS, according to a private soldier.

DR. KOESSEL: Yes, from the viewpoint of the war time volunteer.

THE COMMISSIONER: The Commission will ask counsel to confine his questions to that point and not permit the witness to go off into a lecture or make his answers too long. In other words, get all of your material and evidence in, but let us make an effort to eliminate evidence that is not relevant to the defense.

DR. KOESSEL: Yes.

H0943-0003

DIRECT EXAMINATION.

BY DR. KOESSEL:

Q This witness as a representative of the war time soldiers of the Waffen SS can state their motives and testify that idealistic young people found their hopes of entering a particular decent troop fulfilled. The defense has selected this young man from a group of ten thousand war time volunteers of the Waffen SS.

Q - When were you born?

A I was born on January 9, 1923.

Q Where?

A In Kassel.

Q How old were you when the war broke out?

A When the war broke out, I was sixteen years and eight months old.

Q From which Prisoner of War camp have you come?

A I have come from Prisoner of War Camp 409, Nurnberg, Langwasser.

Q Do you know of the declaration of the inmates of the camp of March 8, 1946?

A Yes, I know this declaration of Langwasser, I signed it myself.

Q Are the contents of this declaration similar to what you wish to say here?

A It is my opinion and the opinion of my comrades that the testimony is simlar to the declaration.

Q When did you enter the Waffen SS?

A After having served one year with the compulsary labor service, I entered the Waffen SS on October 1, 1942.

Q Did you enter the Waffen SS by compulsion, or did you volunteer?

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A I was not forced, I volunteered.

Q Just why did you enter the Waffen SS?

A I made my first acuaintance with the Waffen SS in 1936 during a Gau Party rally of the NSDAP. I especially liked the appearance of these troops. I considered the members of the Waffen SS the elite members of the arm bearing forces of the Wehrmacht. The Waffen SS was spoken of as such a unit in press propaganda and lectures.

Q Did you see your hopes fulfilled in the Waffen SS?

A My hopes concerning the Waffen SS were to find in it an elite troop of idealistic thinking young people found at the most important places and I saw my hopes fulfilled in this respect.

Q In which unit did you begin your service?

A I began my service with the 3rd Company of the First SS Police Rifle Regiment of the Police Division. I was later transferred to the 7th Company of the 1st Regiment of the SS Tank Grenadiers called "Death Head" Bands in southern France.

Q What activities or duties did you perform with these two groups?

A I was trained to be an SS tank Grenadier in the SS.

MR. MONNERAY: Will the defense counsel ask the witness when he came to southern France and in what division?

BY DR. KOESSEL:

Q When did you go to Southern France?

A I was in southern France on November 15, 1942.

Q What was your duties?

A I was trained according to the Ministry Regulation 132-A. In the beginning of February, 1943, I was sent to Southern Russia with the Death Head division.

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Q When did you go into your first battle?

A The first major battle in which I took part was on February 23, 1943 between Poltara and Charkov.

Q Were you always in the foremost front lines with these Death Head units?

A When I belonged to these units and was in Southern Russia, I was at the foremost front lines.

Q Were you not disappointed with your comrades at the front?

A I experienced no disappointments at the front. On the contrary, I have proof to show that I was a member of a troop of soldiers who acted in an examplifying manner.

Q Will you describe such an event and give us the proof of such behaviour?

A On the morning of February 19, 1944, I was inside my dugout at the eastern front. I heard the cries of wounded comrades and when I had reached that vicinity, I myself was seriously wounded. In spite of the danger, two young comrades came to our rescue. The younger of the two, who had come to the front only the day before, died after a very few moments. The other boy who received a wound in his arm was able to make his way to his lines. Now there were two seriously wounded men and one dead man inside the danger line. In spite of the very great danger, a man who had already been wounded eight times. He was a Rottenführer and brought us first aid and protection.

H0943-0006

Q Did your comrades behave themselves toward their enemies in a knightly manner?

A The behaviour of my comrades toward the enemy was a similar one. I know of no cases where we mal-treated prisoners of war or killed any of them.

Q What was the bahaviour of your units toward the French, Polish and Russians as to the native population?

A The relationship between the French, Polish and Russian population was a good one. The population in the West gave us a very hearty farewell when we went to the front. They regretted that we were sent to the vicinity of danger at the front. The population in the east behaved correctly toward us and we showed our gratitude in return by behaving just as correctly.

Q Do you know of any events during the war where peaceful villages were shelled or burnt or any arbitrary action taken?

A I don't know of any cases where villages were burned down or where peaceful members of the population were killed.

Q Were you never told that by your manner of fighting, you were supposed to spread terror among the population or that you were selected to be considered the "selected master race?"

A The fight was to be carried on briefly and properly. We had been given no orders and instructions to arouse terror. We were told to secure the respect of the population by our behaviour and our actions.

Q Was not a particular hatred of the Jews impressed upon you?

A We did not love the Jews, but we also did not hate them. We considered it desirable for the Jews to form their own state.

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Q Have you never heard that the extermination of the Jews was the final solution to the Jewish problem?

A I never heard of an extermination of the Jews as a satisfactory or final solution of the Jewish problem, moreover, I heard nothing of extermination camps and treatment of people such as was only uncovered here during this trial.

Q Will you please tell the tribunal in a few words what your feelings and thought were when you heard that the SS had been accused of being a criminal organization?

A Our desire was to serve our Fatherland in a difficult time in an exemplary manner. Our slogan, "My Honor Means Faith," also meant faith toward humanity and we were faithful. That is what was called to my mind when I heard the SS had been accused of being a criminal organization. The same is true of my comrades, as I was able to find out by means of conversation with numerous members of several camps where I have been.

CROSS EXAMINATION.

BY MAJOR MURRAY:

Q I believe you said that you were sixteen years of age at the time the war broke out. Is that true?

A Yes, I was sixteen years and eight months old when war broke out.

Q At the time the war broke out, you were a member of the Hitler Youth Organization, were you not?

A At the time of the outbreak of war, I was a member of the German Jungvolh.

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Q Did you belong to a particular section of the Hitler Youth, for example, the Streifendienst, or one of the militarized units?

A I only belong to the German Youth. The Streifendienst organization is similar, but I belonged to no military organization just the Hitler Youth.

Q Were your father and mother members of the Nazi party?

A Neither my mother nor my father were members of the party, but I was a member of the party.

Q You were a member of the party?

A Yes since September 1, 1941.

Q You volunteered for membership in the party and for membership in the Waffen SS?

A I volunteered for membership in the party and the Waffen SS.

Q Were all of your comrades in your unit at the front, whom you knew, volunteers in the Waffen SS?

A In the course of numerous conversations, I learned that not all of them were volunteer members of the Waffen SS, but they represented no difficulties as far as the other members of the Waffen SS were concerned.

Q It is true that practically all members of the Waffen SS whom you talked with had volunteered?

A I don't know.

Q Did you meet any Waffen SS men who had not volunteered and were anxious to get out of the Waffen SS and were not satisfied with it?

A I knew members of the Waffen SS who were not volunteers, but I knew none

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who wished to leave the Waffen SS. On the contrary, I knew members of the army, who would gladly have come into our unit of the Waffen SS.

Q As I understand it, you told the Commission that the reason you joined the Waffen SS was because of the high ideals of the Waffen SS. Is that correct?

A I became a member of the Waffen SS because I considered it the elite unit of the German Wehrmacht.

Q You also considered the ideals of the Waffen SS as high ideals and ideals that you wanted to support. Is that right?

A I learned of the ideals of the SS after I had entered the unit, but the reputation and the ethical value of the unit were what attracted me to it.

Q You knew at the time that you volunteered that one of the principal activities of the SS was the very strong persecution of Jews, free-masons and catholich churches. You knew that, did you not?

A I knew nothing of these activities of the SS, but I did know that the SS endeavored to create a true Germanism.

Q By a true Germanism, do you mean the expulsion of all Jews from Germany?

A No.

Q What do you mean by true Germanism?

A By a true Germanism, I mean awakening the noblest elements of the German man.

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Q You know now that the SS was responsible for the murder of six million Jews in cold blood?

A I was a member of the Waffen SS. I did not know that the Waffen SS was accused of having caused the murder of six million Jews.

Q The Waffen SS was only a part of the SS, however, the Waffen SS itself also took part in this cold blooded murder of millions of Jews. You know that now don't you?

A The Waffen SS was a military organization and as far as I know it was subordinate to the Wehrmacht. The smallest units of the SS are now being accused of having killed Jews and this was only learned by myself recently.

Q I am not talking about small units. I am talking about the Waffen SS and you believe that its participation on a large scale in the killing of Jews, Poles and Russians in cold blood is your idea of true idealistic Germanism?

A I know no comrades who killed Jews, nor did I kill Jews myself. If this did happen, it had nothing to do with true Germanism.

Q As an SS man, you came directly under the authority and swore allegiance to Himmler, did you not?

A Yes. As you know, I gave my oath of allegiance to the Fuehrer as supreme commander of the German army.

Q You also swore allegiance to Himmler as head chief of the SS?

A I swore obedience to all officers and chiefs that had been installed by Hitler.

Q Have you heard that a former Youth Leader, Balder Von Schirach, has

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stated that Hitler and Himmler, among others, are responsible for murder a million-fold and it is a terrible crime against all Germany? Have you heard that?

A I heard of this recently in conversations.

Q Do you agree with Schierach in that statement?

A You are giving me and all my comrades a very big puzzle to be solved concerning the past. May 8, 1945 meant not only to me, but possibly for the greater part of German youths, a great disappointment.

Q Answer the question, do you agree with the statement made by Balder Von Schirach. Answer the question "yes" or "no."

A I cannot answer your question in the affirmative or in the negative because I have been in camps up to now behind barbed wire and I cannot form an opinion until I have had a chance to form my own real opinion and to think about everything that has happened.

MR. TAYLOR: I think the witness is in a position to answer the question "yes" or "no" and he has failed to answer the question. I think the question is one that has been intelligently put to the witness as he is testifying to the aims and activities of the Waffen SS according to a private soldier. I think the question is proper. The counsel has asked the witness to answer the question "yes" or "no" if he can do so, therefore, put the question to the witness for his reply.

BY MAJOR MURRAY:

Q Do you agree with the statement made by Balder Von Schirach?

A It is impossible for me to answer the question with a cold "yes" or "no", considering the lack of opportunity that I have had to think these matters over. You are asking me to give an answer to a question con-

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cerning a man whom I once swore allegiance to in the German Youth. I cannot answer this question with a cold "yes" or "no".

DR. KOESSEL: I may be able to help a little. If proof is brought to show that all these murders were actually committed, would you then still be enthusiastic concerning the ideals of the SS and still believe that Adolf Hitler still fought idealistically?

THE WITNESS: In such a case he would not have thought nor acted idealistically.

BY MAJOR MURRAY:

Q Is there any doubt in your mind that Hitler, Himmler and the Nazi gang, did kill six million people in cold blood?

A If the Nurnberg Tribunal says so, then I must believe it.

Q Another thing you approved of was the concentration camps, I presume?

A I know that concentration camps existed.

Q You know that the SS operated them and guarded them, don't you?

A I know that men in the Waffen SS uniforms guarded these concentration camps.

Q Did you consider that an idealistic service to Germany?

A I don't know why these concentration camps were erected. I myself was only in such a camp that was annexed

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to a concentration camp. It was at Dachau. I once was in a building that had served as a hospital of a unit there and I had an opportunity to watch the inmates who waited on us at the tables in the dining room.

Q I asked you if you considered guarding a concentration camp as an idealistic service to Germany.

A I don't believe that this service was considered an ideal one by the members of the Waffen SS. They had to perform the duty, I presume, but they would rather have been at the front.

Q You knew, when you joined the Waffen SS, that it was one of your duties, did you not, in the Waffen SS?

A No, I did not know that. I considered the Waffen SS a front line unit.

Q Well, when you found out, you were still perfectly willing to stay in the Waffen SS, were you not?

A I was perfectly willing to fulfill my front service in the Waffen SS.

Q You also knew that millions of workers were brought from other countries to work in Germany?

A I heard of this later.

Q You knew, did you not, that the Waffen SS played an important part in rounding up these people, guarding them and forcing them to leave their homes and work for Germany?

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A From the conversations, I only knew that these people were supposed to have come voluntarily.

Q You knew better than that - you knew that they were forced to come to Germany and everyone else in Germany knew that.

A No, I did not know that.

Q You were on the Russian front for a considerable length of time, were you not?

A I was not at the Russian front for a long time. My front line service was very short as I was wounded twice.

Q While in Russian territory, did you hear of the Einsatzgruppen?

A I did not hear of the Einsatzgruppen when I was in Russia.

Q When did you first hear of them?

A After Germany collapsed.

Q You did not see the thousands of villages and towns they burned down in the Russian territory?

A No, I did not see them.

Q You were in Russia?

A Yes.

Q You did not see these thousands of villages that were burned out by this anti-partisan Einsatzgruppen?

A I saw nothing.

BY COLONEL OSLOV:

H0943-0015

Q Do you consider Hitler's statement idealistic and true that only German people are noble and real people - all other nations, particularly slavs, are just sub-races?

A I was taught that the Slavs are part of the Indo-European family of which we Germans are also a part.

Q You did not answer my question. My question was, do you consider Hitler's statements correct and honest that these people are a sub-race?

A These people were not of a sub-race.

Q Then these statements are not correct?

A I did not hear these statements of Hitler but should he have made them, they are not correct.

Q Did you never read Hitler's Mein Kampf?

A I read Hitler's book, Mein Kampf, but I don't remember every individual phrase in this book.

Q You have read his statements concerning the Slav people?

A I don't remember these statements.

Q You were at the eastern front, wereyou not?

A Yes, I was at the eastern front.

Q Did you not attend the execution orders of the summary courts there.

A I did not take part in any executions, I saw no executions and I heard of no executions.

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Q Were there any such cases in your unit where SS men protested and then beat the civilian population to deahh?

A I saw no excesses and saw no one murdered.

BY MR. MONNERAY:

Q Where were you in the south of France.

A I was in Thonas and St. Medair.

Q How long were you in France?

A From the 15th or 18th of November, 1942 until the beginning of February, 1943.

Q What was the Company?

A The 7th Company in the 1st Regiment of SS Tank Grenadiers, Division Death Head.

Q Before you were in the Police Division?

A Yes, I was in the Composition Staff of the Police Division in Devonshire. This is a troop training company in Heidelagen in Poland.

Q What was the nature of this police unit?

A It was an SS Police Division, which was to be replenished. We were given infantry training in order to be prepared for front duty.

Q Why was this unit called a Police Unit?

A It was an SS division and called itself a police division, which as far as I know had its origin from a police organization.

Q Did you have any police missions during your stay with this unit?

A No, we had no police mission.

Q What was your duty in France?

A I was to prepare myself in a military manner for front duty.

Q What was the activities of the unit in France?

A The activities of my unit in France were the same as mine.

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Q Did members of your unit carry out any arrests?

A As far as I know, members of my unit did not carry out arrests.

Q Do you know of members of any German unit in this area who did carry out arrests?

A I don't know of any.

Q Did your unit cooperate with other units in any police preparations, searching preparations?

A I don't know of this.

Q You personally were not employed in those operations?

A I was not employed in any such operations.

Q In Russia, you were always in the front line?

A Yes, I was always in the front line.

Q No further questions

MR. TAYLOR: Does the defense counsel have other questions?

BY DR. KOESSEL:

Q You answered to the question if you had seen any villages burned down by the Einsatzgruppen?

A I knew no Einsatzgruppen.

Q Do you mean when you answer the question in the negative that you saw no villages at all that were burned down?

A Of course, I saw destroyed villages and buildings, but I did not learn by whom or through which strategic measures they had been destroyed.

Q Did you serve with the SS Police Division only as a front line man?

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A I was not at the front with this SS Police Division. I know from what my trainers and teachers told me it was a front division.

Q Would it be correct for me to say that you were stationed with a training or reserve unit of the SS Police Division?

A It is correct when you say that I was with a training and reserve unit of the SS Police Division.

Q What were the Regiments of the SS Police Division called?

A The SS Police Rifle or SS Police Infantry Regiment.

Q In the course of the interrogation, you also said that there was no difference between the members of the Waffen SS who volunteered and the others. Did you mean to say that both groups fulfilled their duties toward the Fatherland in a similar fashion or did you want to say something else?

A I wanted to say that they were neither better or worse then those who volunteered and they had only one object, one mission and that was to serve their country.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: If there are no further questions, the witness will be excused. We will recess until 1400 HOURS.

(THE COMMISSION RECESSED AT 1300 HOURS.)

The foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony of FELIX SCHIEBLICH, taken on 13 June, 1946.

Reporter (pp)

Alice Meehan

Reporter (pp)

CERTIFIED TO:

Geo R Taylor

Commissioner.

H0943-0019

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY FOR THE DEFENSE OF ORGANIZATIONS, TAKEN BEFORE A COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL DATED 13 MARCH 1946.

13 June 1946.

(The Commission convened at 1130)

COMMISSIONER:
Mr. George R. Taylor.

THE S.S.

FELIX SCHIEBLICH, a witness, took the stand and testified as follows:

BY MR. GEORGE R. TAYLOR:

Q. What is your name ?

A. Felix Schieblich.

Q. Will you repeat this oath after me :

I swear by God, the Almighty and Omniscient, that I will speak the pure truth and will withhold and add nothing.

(The witness repeated the oath.)

THE COMMISSIONER: You may sit down. I understand that this witness' testimony will be confined to the aims and activities of the Waffen SS, according to a private soldier.

DR. KOESSEL: Yes, from the viewpoint of the war time volunteer.

THE COMMISSIONER: The Commission will ask counsel to confine his questions to that point and not permit the witness to go off into a lecture or make his answers too long. In other words, get all of your material and evidence in, but let us make an effort to eliminate evidence that is not relevant to the defense.

DR. KOESSEL: Yes.

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY DR. KOESSEL:

Q. This witness as a representative of the war time soldiers of the Waffen SS can state their motives and testify that idealistic young people found their hopes of entering a particular decent troop fulfilled. The defense has selected this young man from a group of ten thousand war time volunteers of the Waffen SS .

H0943 - 0020

Q. When were you born ?

A. I was born on January 9, 1923.

Q. Where ?

A. In Kassel.

Q. How old were you when the war broke out ?

A. When the war broke out, I was sixteen years and eight months old.

Q. From which Prisoner of War camp have you come ?

A. I have come from Prisoner of War camp 409, Nurnberg, Langwasser.

Q. Do you know of the declaration of the inmates of the camp of March 8, 1946 ?

A. Yes, I know this declaration of Langwasser, I signed it myself.

Q. Are the contents of this declaration similar to what you wish to say here ?

A. It is my opinion and the opinion of my comrades that the testimony is similar to the declaration.

Q. When did you enter the Waffen SS ?

A. After having served one year with the compulsary labor service. I entered the Waffen SS on October 1, 1942.

Q. Did you enter the Waffen SS by compulsion, or did you volunteer ?

A. I was not forced, I volunteered.

Q. Just why did you enter the Waffen SS ?

A. I made my first acquaintance with the Waffen SS in 1936 during a Gau Party rally of the NSDAP. I especially liked the appearance of these troops. I considered the members of the Waffen SS the elite members of the arm bearing forces of the Wehrmacht. The Waffen SS was spoken of as such a unit in press propaganda and lectures.

Q. Did you see your hopes fulfilled in the Waffen SS ?

A. My hopes concerning the Waffen SS were to fing in it an elite troop of idealistic thinking young people found at the most important places and I saw my hopes fulfilled in this respect.

Q. In which unit did you begin your service ?

A. I began my service with the 3rd Company of the First SS Police Rifle Regiment of the Police Division. I was later transferred to the 7th Company of the 1st Regiment of the SS Tank Grenadiers called "Death Head" Bands in southern France.

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Q. What activities or duties did you perform with these two groups ?

A. I was trained to be an SS tank Grenadier in the SS.

M. MONNERAY: Will the defense counsel ask the witness when he came to southern France and in what division ?

BY DR. KOESSEL:

Q. When did you go to Southern France ?

A. I was in southern France on November 15, 1942.

Q. What was your duties ?

A. I was trained according to the Ministry Regulation 132-A. In the beginning of February, 1943, I was sent to Southern Russia with the Death Head division.

Q. When did you go into your first battle ?

A. The first major battle in which I took part was on February 23, 1943 between Poltara and Charkov.

Q. Were you always in the foremost front lines with these Death Head units ?

A. When I belonged to these units and was in Southern Russia, I was at the foremost front lines.

Q. Were you not disappointed with your comrades at the front ?

A. I experienced no disappointments at the front. On the contrary, I have proof to show that I was a member of a troop of soldiers who acted in an examplifying manner.

Q. Will you describe such an event and give us the proof of such behaviour?

A. On the morning of February 19, 1944, I was inside my dugout at the eastern front. I heard the cries of wounded comrades and when I had reached that vicinity, I myself was seriously wounded. In spite of the danger, two young comrades came to our rescue. The younger of the two, who had come to the front only the day before, died after a very few moments. The other boy who received a wound in his arm able to make his way to his lines. Now there were two seriously wounded men and one dead man inside the danger line. In spite of the very great danger, a man who had already been wounded eight times. He was a Rottenfuhrer and brought us first aid and protection.

Q. Did your comrades behave themselves toward their enemies in a knightly manner ?

H0943-0022

A. The behaviour of my comrades toward the enemy was a similar one. I know of no cases where we mal-treated prisoners of war or killed any of them.

Q. What was the behaviour of your units toward the French, Polish and Russians as to the native population ?

A. The relationship between the French, Polish and Russian population was a good one. The population in the West gave us a very hearty farewell when we went to the front. They regretted that we were sent to the vicinity of danger at the front. The population in the east behaved correctly toward us and we showed our gratitude in return by behaving just as correctly.

Q. Do you know of any events during the war where peaceful villages were shelled or burnt or any arbitrary action taken ?

A. I don't know of any cases where villages were burned down or where peaceful members of the population were killed.

Q. Were you never told that by your manner of fighting, you were supposed to spread terror among the population or that you were selected to be considered the "selected master race "?

A. The fight was to be carried on briefly and properly. We had been given no orders and instructions to arouse terror. We were told to secure the respect of the population by our behaviour and our actions.

Q. Was not a particular hatred of the Jews impressed upon you.

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Q. Have you never heard that the extermination of the Jews was the final solution to the Jewish problem ?

A. I never heard of an extermination of the Jews as a satisfactory or final solution of the Jewish problem, moreover, I heard nothing of extermination camps and treatment of people such as was only uncovered here during this trial.

Q. Will you please tell the tribunal in a few words what your feelings and thought were when you heard that the SS had been accused of being a criminal organization ?

H0943-0023

A. Our desire was to serve our Fatherland in a difficult time in an exemplary manner. Our slogan, "My Honor Means Faith," also meant faith toward humanity and we were faithful. That is what was called to my mind when I heard the SS had been accused of being a criminal organization. The same is true of my comrades, as I was able to find out by means of conversation with numerous members of several camps where I have been.

CROSS EXAMINATION

BY MAJOR MURRAY:

Q. I believe you said that you were sixteen years of age at the time the war broke out. Is that true ?

A. Yes, I was sixteen years and eight months old when war broke out.

Q. At the time the war broke out, you were a member of the Hitler Youth Organization, were you not ?

A. At the time of the outbreak of war, I was a member of the German Jungvolk.

H0943 - 0024

Q. Did you belong to a particular section of the Hitler Youth, for example, the Streifendienst, or one of the militarized units?

A. I only belong to the German Youth. The Streifendienst organization is similar, but I belonged to no military organization, just the Hitler Youth.

Q. Were you father and mother members of the Nazi party?

A. Neither my mother or my father were members of the party, but I was a member of the party.

Q. You were a member of the party?

A. Yes, since September 1, 1941.

Q. You volunteered for membership in the party and for membership in the Waffen SS?

A. I volunteered for membership in the party and the Waffen SS.

Q. Were all of your comrades in your unit at the front, whom you know, volunteers in the Waffen SS?

A. In the course of numerous conversation, I learned that not all of them were volunteer members of the Waffen SS, but they represented no difficulties as far as the other members of the Waffen SS were concerned.

Q. It is true that practically all members of the Waffen SS whom you talked with had volunteered?

A. I don't know.

Q. Did you meet any Waffen SS men who had not volunteered and were anxious to get out of the Waffen SS and were not satisfied with it?

A. I knew members of the Waffen SS who were not volunteers, but I know none who wished to leave the Waffen SS. On the contrary, I know members of the army, who would gladly have come into our unit of the Waffen SS.

Q. As I understand it, you told the Commissioner that the reason you joined the Waffen SS was because of the high ideals of the Waffen SS. Is that correct?

H0943-0025

A. I became a member of the Waffen SS because I considered it the elite unit of the German Wehrmacht.

Q. You also considered the ideals of the Waffen SS as high ideals and ideals that you wanted to support. Is that right?

A. I learned of the ideals of the SS after I had entered the unit, but the reputation and ethical value of the unit were what attracted me to it.

Q. You know at the time that you volunteered that one of the principal activities of the SS was the very strong persecution of Jews, free-masons and catholic churches. You know that, did you not?

A. I knew nothing of these activities of the SS, but I did know that the SS endeavoured to create a true Germanism.

Q. By true Germanism, do you mean the expulsion of all Jews from Germany?

A. No.

Q. What do you mean by true Germanism?

A. By a true Germanism, I mean awakening the noblest elements of the German man.

Q. You know now that the SS was responsible for the murder of six million Jews in cold blood?

A. I was a member of the Waffen SS. I did not know that the Waffen SS was accused of having caused the murder of six million Jews.

Q. The Waffen SS was only a part of the SS, however, the Waffen SS.itself took part in this cold blooded murder of millions of Jews. You know that now, don't you?

A. The Waffen SS was a military organization, and as far as I know it was subordinate to the Wehrmacht. The smallest units of the SS are now being accused of having killed Jews and this was only learned by myself recently.

Q. I am not talking about small units. I am talking about the Waffen SS and you believe that its participation on a large scale in the killing of Jews, Poles and Russians in cold blood is your idea of true idealistic Germanism?

A. I know no comrades who killed Jews, nor did I kill Jews myself. If this did happen, it had nothing to do with true Communism.

Q. As an SS man, you came directly under the authority and swore allegiance to Himmler, did you not?

A. Yes. As you know, I gave my oath of allegiance to the Fuehrer as supreme commander of the German army.

Q. You also swore allegiance to Himmler as head chief of the SS?

A. I swore obedience to all officers and chiefs that had been instilled by Hitler.

Q. Have you heard that a former Youth Leader, Baldur von Schirach, has stated that Hitler and Himmler, among others, are responsible for murder a million-fold, and it is a terrible crime against all Germany? Have you heard that?

A. I heard of this recently in conversations.

Q. Do you agree with Schirach in that statement?

A. You are giving me and all my comrades a very big puzzle to be solved concerning the past. May 8, 1945 meant not only for me, but possible for the greater part of German youths, a great disappointment.

Q. Answer the question, do you agree with the statement made by Baldur von Schirach. Answer the question "yes" or "no".

A. I cannot answer your question in the affirmative or in the negative, because I have been in camps up to now behind barbed wire, and I cannot form an opinion until I have had a chance to form my own real opinion and to think about everything that has happened.

MR. TAYLOR: I think the witness is in a position to answer the question "yes" or "no" and he has failed to answer the question. I think the question is one that has been intelligently put to the witness as he is testifying to the aims and activities of the Waffen SS according to a private soldier. I think the question is proper. The cousel has asked the witness to answer the question "yes" or "no" if he can do so, therefore,

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put the question to the witness for his reply.

BY MAJOR MURRAY:

Q. Do you agree with the statement made by Baldur von Schirach?

A. It is impossible for me to answer the question with a cold "yes" or "no", considering the lack of opportunity that I have had to think these matters over. You are asking me to give an answer to a question concerning a man whom I once swore allegiance to in the German Youth. I cannot answer this question with a cold "yes" or "no".

DR. KOESSEL: I may be able to help a little. If proof is brought to show that all those murders were actually committed, would you then still be enthusiastic concerning the ideals of the SS and still believe that Adolf Hitler still fought idealistically?

THE WITNESS: In such a case he would not have thought nor acted idealistically.

BY MAJOR MURRAY:

Q. Is there any doubt in your mind that Hitler, Himmler and the Nazi gang, did kill six million people in cold blood?

A. If the Nurnberg Tribunal says so, then I must believe it.

Q. Another thing you approved of was the concentration camps, I presume?

A. I know that the concentration camps existed.

Q. You know that the SS operated them and guarded them, don't you?

A. I know that men in the Waffen SS uniforms guarded those concentration camps.

Q. Did you consider that an idealistic service to Germany?

A. I don't know why those concentration camps were erected. I myself was only in such a camp that was annexed to a concentration camp. It was at Dachau. I once was in a building that had served as a hospital of a unit there, and I had an opportunity to watch the inmates who waited on us at the tables in the

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dining room.

Q. I asked you if you considered guarding a concentration camp as an idealistic service to Germany?

A. I don't believe that this service was considered an ideal one by members of the Waffen SS. They had to perform the duty, I presume, but they would rather have been at the front.

Q. You know, when you joined the Waffen SS, that it was one of your duties, did you not, in the Waffen SS?

A. No, I did not know that. I considered the Waffen SS a front line unit.

Q. Well, when you found out, you were still perfectly willing to stay in the Waffen SS, were you not?

A. I was perfectly willing to fulfill my front service in the Waffen SS.

Q. You also know that millions of workers were brought from other countries to work in Germany?

A. I heard of this later.

Q. You know, did you not, that the Waffen SS played an important part in rounding up those people, guarding them, and forcing them to leave their homes and work for Germany?

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A From the conversations, I only knew that these people were supposed to have come voluntarily.

Q You knew better than that - you knew that they were forced to come to Germany and everyone else in Germany knew that.

A No, I did not know that.

Q You were on the Russian front for a considerable length of time, were you not?

A I was not at the Russian front for a long time. My fron t line service was very short as I was wounded twice.

Q While in Russian territory, did you hear of the Einsatzgruppen?

A I did not hear of the Einsatzgruppen when I was in Russia.

Q When did you first hear of them?

A After Germany collapsed.

Q You did not see the thousands of villages and towns they burned down in the Russian territory?

A No, I did not see them.

Q You were in Russia?

A Yes.

Q You did not see these thousands of villages that were burned out by this anti-partisan Einsatzgruppen?

A I saw nothing.

BY COLONEL OSLOV:

Q Do you consider Hitler's statement idealistic and true that only German people are noble and real people - all other nations, particularly slavs, are just sub-races?

A I was taught that the Slavs are part of the Indo-European family of which we Germans are also a part.

Q You did not answer my question. My question was, do you consider Hitler's statements correct and honest that these people are a sub-race?

A These people were not of a sub-race.

Q Then these statements are not correct?

A I did not hear these statements of Hitler but should he have made them, they are not correct.

Q Did you never read Hitler's Mein Kampf?

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A I read Hitler'sbook, Mein Kampf, but I don't remember every individual phrase in this book.

Q You have read his statement concerning the Slav people?

A I don't remember these statements.

Q You were at the easter n front, were you not?

A Yes, I was at the eastern front.

Q Did you not attend the execution orders of the summary courts there?

A I did not take part in any executions, I saw no executions and I heard of no executions.

Q Were there any such cases in your unit where SS men protested and then beat the civilian population to death?

A I saw no excesses and saw no one murdered.

BY M. MONNERAY:

Q Where were you in the south of France.

A I was in Thonas and St. Medair.

Q How long were you in France?

A From the 15th or 18th of November, 1942 until the beginning of February, 1943.

Q What was the Company?

A The 7th Company in the 1st Regiment of SS Tank Grenadiers, Division Death Head.

Q Before you were in the Police Division?

A Yes, I was in the Composition Staff of the Police Division in Devonshire. This is a troop training company in Heidelagen in Poland.

Q What was the nature of this police unit?

A It was an SS Police Division, which was to be replenished. We were given infantry training in order to be prepared for front duty.

Q Why was this unit called a Police Unit?

A It was an SS division and called itself a police division, which as far as I know had its origin from a police organization.

Q Did you have any police missions during your stay with this unit?

A No, we had no police mission.

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Q What was your duty in France?

A I was to prepare myself in a military manner for front duty.

Q What was the activities of the unit in France?

A The activities of my unit in France were the same as mine.

Q Did members of your unit carry out any arrests?

A As far as I know, members of my unit did not carry out arrests.

Q Do you know of members of any German unit in this area who did carry out arrests?

A I don't know of any.

Q Did your unit cooperate with other units in any police preparations searching preparations?

A I don't know of this.

Q You personally were not employed in those operations?

A I was not employed in any such operations.

Q In Russia, you were always in the front line?

A Yes, I was always in the front line.

Q No further questions.

MR. TAYLOR: Does the defense counsel have other questions?

BY DR. KOESSEL:

Q You answered to the question if you had seen any villages burned down by the Einsatzgruppen?

A I knew no Einsatzgruppen.

Q Do youu mean when you answer the question in the negative that you saw no villages at all that were burned down?

A Of course, I saw destroyed villages and buildings, but I did not learn by whom or through which strategic measures they had been destroyed.

Q Did you serve with the SS Police Division only as a front line man?

A I was not at the front with this SS Police Division. I know from what my trainers and teachers told me it was a front division.

Q Would it be correct for me to say that you were stationed with a training or reserve unit of the SS Police Division?

A It is correct when you say that I was with a training and reserve unit of the SS Police Division.

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Q What were the Regiments of the SS Police Division called?

A The SS Police Rifle or SS Police Infantry Regiment.

Q In the course of the interrogation, you also said that there was no difference between the members of the Waffen SS who volunteered and the others. Did you mean to say that both groups fulfilled their duties toward the Fatherland in a similar fashion or did you want to say something else?

A I wanted to say that they were neither better or worse than those who volunteered and they had only one object, one mission, and that was to serve their country.

CAPTAIN TUBRIDY: If there are no further questions, wthe witness will be excused. We will recess until 1400 hours.

(THE COMMISSION RECESSED AT 1300 HOURS.)

The foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony of FELIX SCHIEBLICH, taken on 13 June, 1946.

ALICE MEEHAN
Reporter (pp)

CERTIFIED TO:

GEORGE TAYLOR
Commissioner